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PSYCHOLOGY.

The Recidivist.—In the September *Forum* there appeared an article on the topic "Criminals not the victim of Heredity." On summing up, the writer comes to the conclusion that "a criminal is like any other man." It is the purpose of the present writer to show, by unimpeachable and incontrovertible evidence, that this last statement is a gross error. The *Forum* writer makes an indiscriminate use of the terms professional, habitual, and congenital criminal. A professional criminal is not, necessarily, a congenital criminal, nor is an habitual criminal necessarily a professional criminal. I presume that the writer of the article quoted above, means the recidivist all through his paper, and therefore will endeavor to prove that the congenital criminal and the recidivist is, anatomically and physiologically, entirely different from normal man in many respects. In this paper I do not wish to enter the domain of speculative psychology, nor do I intend to grapple with the grave problems now agitating sociologists and penologists, therefore will content myself with the introduction of facts and facts alone. The statement of the present writer that the recidivist is, anatomically and physiologically, an abnormal type of man, is not the conclusion of an hour or day, but is the rational deduction obtained from days, months, and years spent at the dissecting table and microscope, and in the study of the criminal, both in a state of freedom and when incarcerated. The criminal physiognomy is of so marked a type that most men are able to recognize it at a glance. I borrowed six photographs of criminals from Major Owen, Chief of Detectives, Louisville, Ky., for the purpose of illustrating an article on "Criminal Anthropology," (which article appeared in the *N. Y. Medical Record*, Jan. 13), selecting them at random from some fifty or sixty other photographs of criminals. Five of these photographs were recidivists, and one was an *occasional* criminal. These six photographs were shown to one hundred men with the following statement and request: "Here are six criminals; five of them are habitual malefactors, and one of them is, comparatively speaking, an honest man—pick out the honest man." Ninety-five men picked out the photograph of the *occasional* criminal without a second's hesitation. The discriminating and exact Maudsley says: "All persons who have made criminals their study, recognize a distinct criminal class of beings, who herd together in our large cities in a thieves quarter, giving themselves up

to intemperance, rioting in debauchery, without regard to marriage ties or the bars of consanguinity, and *propagating* a criminal population of degenerate beings. For it is furthermore a matter of observation that this criminal class constitutes a *degenerate or morbid variety of mankind*, marked by peculiar low physical and mental characteristics. * * * * * Their *family likeness* betrays them as fellows by the hand of nature marked, quoted, and signed to do a deed of shame."¹ For obvious reasons, I have taken the liberty of italicizing certain words in the above quotation. A celebrated criminal lawyer of New York once told the writer that he could tell a recidivist at a glance, and that he never made a mistake in his diagnosis of moral obliquity. Professor Enrico Ferri, an Italian anthropologist, tells us that on one occasion he examined several hundred soldiers, and found only one whose face declared him a criminal. He afterwards ascertained that this man had committed murder. Lombroso submitted to thirty-two young girls the photographs of twenty thieves and twenty moral men. Eighty per cent. of these girls recognized the first as malefactors, the second as moral, upright men.² Emile Gautier, who was, for a time, confined in Lyons prison says that "these criminals have a general family resemblance, which makes them a class apart."³ A warden of an eastern penitentiary (Sing-Sing) told the writer that there were not only twins in every prison, but there were "twins, triplets, quadruplets, ay! even twelvelets" (sic). An interesting point in connection with the criminal physiognomy is that it is to a large extent independent of nationality. The German criminal is not unlike the Italian, nor is the French unlike the English criminal. M. Joly remarks, 'I should say that in M. A. Bertillon's' office I was shown nearly sixty photographs of Irish, English, and American thieves. It would have been difficult in many cases to discern the Anglo-Saxon rather than any other physiognomy.'⁴

Now let us analyze the criminal type, feature by feature, and see what constitutes this universal and well-marked physiognomy. The observations of the writer when in pursuit of this analysis, were not confined to any particular class of criminals; he examined all classes. He soon discovered, however, that this distinctive type was to be found in the congenital recidivist alone. The occasional criminal and the criminal by calculation (the true professional criminal), were found to

¹Maudsley. Responsibility in Mental Disease, p. 29.

²Lombroso: L'Uomo Delinquente.

³Havelock Ellis: The Criminal.

⁴Havelock Ellis: The Criminal, p. 82

be anatomically and physiologically normal. In the recidivist there is marked exaggeration of the cephalic indices. In a dolichocephalic recidivist the long head is very noticeable. The same exaggeration is found in brachycephalic recidivists. Oxycephalism (sugar-loaf head) is very frequently observed. In three hundred drawings taken from live and dead subjects by the writer, one hundred and ninety-eight are oxycephalic. Lauvergne says of this kind of head: "When it is complete, that is to say, when it presents a prominent base supporting an inclined pyramid, more or less truncated, this head announces the monstrous alliance of the most eminent faculty of man, genius, with the most pronounced impulses to rape, murder, and theft." The bilateral elevation of the sagittal suture (Benedikt's lines⁵) has been noticed in the three of the six hundred, who form the class from which these deductions are drawn. Professor Benedikt considers these sutural elevations of great importance in criminal anthropology and in his book *Kraniometrie und Kephalometrie* says "that, though rare, when present they are significant of great moral obliquity." There is, generally, marked enlargement in the orbital arches of recidivists, together with receding foreheads. In three hundred and fifty of the four hundred profile and quarter-face photographs of habitual criminals that I have examined, this enlargement of the orbital arches was plainly noticeable. In the two hundred drawings and photographs that form my collection, it is noticeable in one hundred and eighty-two. Tenchini and Lombroso, as well as Benedikt, have pointed out this abnormality in the orbital arches of criminals. In my collection of skulls there are four skulls of recidivists; all of these show this enlargement of the orbital arches. Prognathism is a marked characteristic in the physiognomy of the recidivist. The large, heavy lower jaw and protruding mouth strikes the observer at once. This feature is rarely absent in the congenital criminal. It is an abnormality eloquent in its atavistic suggestiveness.

The low receding forehead, the enlarged orbital arches, the prognathous jaws, and high cheek-bones of the congenital criminal are strikingly like those of our pithecoïd ancestors.⁶

Just here it is proper to state, that, in an article on Effemination and Viraginity which appeared in the *N. Y. Medical Record*, September 16th, I have asserted that atavism only attacks individuals of a neurasthenic type; that the phenomenon of reversion is found only in psychopathic aberrants. This, in a measure, is true in all cases of

⁵Benedikt: *Kraniometrie u. Kephalometrie*.

⁶The writer: *Criminal Anthropology*, *N. Y. Med. Record*, Jan. 13.

reversion, but, in the article alluded to, I then had reference to psycho-sexual atavism alone. Sexual perversion and psychic hermaphroditism are prominent characteristics of the congenital criminal; I do not intend, however, to discuss them in this paper. I have examined, macroscopically and microscopically, twenty-three criminal brains. Twenty of these brains were those of recidivists, and abnormalities were found in all of them. In one of them, taken from a criminal executed for an attempt at rape and murder, there was confluency of the fissures. In several of them the frontal lobe presented four (apparent) convolutions; in all of them there was deficiency in weight. In others the gray matter was scanty and thin, and the convolutions superficial and few in number. Havelock Ellis says: "The important matter of the vascular supply of the brain in criminals has yet received little attention, but a variety of pathological features have been found in the cerebral substance and membrane—pigmentation, degenerating capillaries, etc."; he then adds in conclusion, "It must be added, as a point of considerable importance, that in very few cases have these pathological lesions *produced any traceable symptoms during life*." There are two kinds of abnormal ears found in the criminal type; large out-standing ears, like those of the chimpanzee and nshiego-mbouve, and ears, small, and closely applied to the skull, like those of the gorilla. I have found that the small ear is generally possessed by the sneak-thief and pick-pocket, while the large ear is possessed by the burglar with murderous tendencies. In all my experience I have never seen an habitual petty thief with a large ear, while all the murderers whom I have examined had large ears. A prison-keeper said to be on one occasion: "I can tell a thief from a murderer every time, by the size and shape of his ears." (sic). I have thirty-six sketches of pick-pockets. These drawings were made from life, and are drawn to scale, and in all of them the ear is small and, generally, misshapen. One sketch, made of a convict now in an Indiana prison, shows the strange abnormality of a forked helix. Féré and Segelas present a cut of an ear somewhat like the sketch just mentioned. There are other abnormalities in the ear of the recidivist, such as "a development of the Darwinian tubercle, absence of one of the branches of the fork, absence of the helix, effacement of the anti-helix, etc., etc."⁸ Most of these abnormalities are, unquestionably, atavistic attempts, and especially is this true of the small gorilla-like ear and the large, projecting chimpanzee-like ear.

⁷Havelock Ellis: The Criminal, p. 63.

⁸Ibid, p. 68.

The criminal has a peculiar, feral stare, which once seen and noted can never be forgotten. A noted detective, (Bligh of Louisville, now dead) called it the "ape-eye."⁹ "Look," said he to me on one occasion when we were discussing criminals, "Look at the next ape you see and you will know what I mean." (sic). The congenital criminal,¹⁰ when looking at one seems to focus his sight on a point some distance beyond one's body. It is difficult to describe this look. Bligh's "ape-eye" comes nearer to it than anything else I can think of.

The special senses are generally very much exaggerated in the congenital criminal. The hearing of twenty-eight recidivists out of thirty tested with the watch, was found to be more acute than normal. Some of these criminals possessed the microscopic eyesight of birds, describing the appearance of minute objects correctly, the details of which, to be seen by me, rendered the use of a lens absolutely necessary; and I may add that my eyes are normal.

Others were far-sighted, some of them being able to read Snellen's type at double the normal distance. The sense of smell, that is for some odors, was decidedly more acute than normal. I washed my hands in water scented with a few drops of violet perfume; they were then washed in pure water and carefully dried. Three billiard balls were then held in the hands for a few moments and then deposited on a table with a half dozen others. Thirteen out of the twenty-eight recidivists under observation, picked out the balls which had been handled declaring that they could plainly distinguish the violet odor. * * * * I once knew a recidivist in St. Louis who could tell his friends by their personal odors.¹¹ I had this man's skull in my cabinet for a number of years; it was eventually stolen from me, and is now, probably, in some museum of anatomy. It was strikingly like the skull of the Man of Spy,¹² and an extraordinary instance of atavism in every structural characteristic. I have now analyzed the physiognomy of the congenital criminal feature by feature. When I place each part in its proper place I construct a mosaic of a variety in the human race entirely different from normal man. I have shown

⁹The writer: *Criminal Anthropology*, N. Y. Medical Record, Jan. 13.

¹⁰I wish to call attention to the fact that I consider the congenital criminal to be the only true recidivist. I make this distinction in order to emphasize the great difference that exists between the professional, occasional criminal, and the true recidivist who is born a criminal. J. W., Jr.

¹¹The reader is respectfully referred to the works of Spencer, Tylor, Reclus, Wolfe and others for kindred observations on the special senses of savages.

¹²Wright: *Man in the Glacial Period*, p. 277.

that these abnormalities are anatomically and physiologically irregular. The brain, the seat of the moral function is involved as well as bone, nerve and tissue. I have said nothing of color (pallor) of the hair, of cutaneous insensibility, of the form and shape of the extremities, and of numerous other abnormalities. I think that I have proven that the recidivist is *not* "like every other man." I promised in the beginning of this paper that I would not enter the domain of metaphysics. I have, in another article, fully discussed this branch of the subject. I cannot refrain, however, from noticing several of the *Forum* writer's statements. His whole paper is made up of assertions, the basis of which are founded on personal beliefs. It is the old story of religion against science; the old mistake of separating mind and brain matter, when, in a measure, the two are identical. I am not an Averroist, nor am I a believer in the doctrines of emanation and absorption. But I do believe, (and this belief can be proven to be correct), that wherever there are receptive ganglia, whether in organisms high or low in the scale of animal life, there this element of the brain, which the Greeks called Psyche, enters in. The *Forum* writer says that he does not believe that the moral function is an inherited one. Does he believe that man sprang into existence fully endowed with all the mental attributes we find in him at the present time? Does he deny the fact that mind has undergone evolution and development since the time of our pithecoïd ancestors? Does he mean to maintain that the brain of an infant born to-day is no further developed than was that of one born twenty thousand years ago? Would he have us believe that the moral function is no further developed in us than it was in the ancient Britons, or than it is in the autochthon of Australia? That morals are, to a certain extent, dependent on education, I do not for one instant deny, but that they are wholly so, no one, who knows the negro and the results of a hundred years of moral education expended on him, will for one instant affirm. I take the American negro simply because he is a convenient example. Morals are the result of evolutionary development, of inherited experiences, as much so as any other inherited function. The laws of atavism, of reversion to ancestral types, and of inheritance apply to the mind as well as the body. We cannot place morals, a purely mental function, on a pedestal by themselves and write beneath them "Cave! Deus Sum." Says the *Forum* writer: "The moment that he understands that 'honesty is the best policy' the average professional criminal becomes honest." As I have said before, in the first part of this paper, the *Forum* writer does not discriminate when speaking of criminals. Now this state-

ment may be true in the case of the professional criminal i. e. the criminal by calculation, but it is not true in the case of the recidivist. The recidivist never recognizes the fact that honesty is the best policy, but continues to commit anti-social acts until the end of his life. His moral imbecility, the direct result of atavistic degeneration, is such that he does not consider his anti-social acts criminal in any sense of the word. Dugdale in his remarkable work "The Jukes" has clearly proven how great a factor heredity is in the production of criminals. The evidence in his book alone ought to be convincing to any unbiased mind, but when it is substantiated by the evidence of such men as Lombroso, Ottolenghi, Ellis, Marro and Segelas it becomes absolute authority.

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